

**Applicant:** Takao Tsuruoka  
**Application No.:** 10/646,637

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the Abstract with the following new Abstract:

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#### ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An image pickup system has a noise estimating unit which estimates the amount of noise contained in a digitized signal from an image pickup element composed of an array of a plurality of pixels, either for each pixel or for each specified unit area made up of a plurality of pixels, and a shooting conditions estimation unit which estimates the shooting condition when an image based on the signal is acquired. The amount of noise estimated by the noise estimating unit is corrected on the basis of the shooting conditions estimated by the shooting conditions estimation unit, and the noise in the signal is reduced on the basis of the corrected amount of noise.